(b) the steps being taken by Government to check such incidents; and

(c) whether Government would consider to make the present laws in this regard more stringent?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY): (a) As per National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) data a total of 18359, 19348 and 20737 cases of rape (including victims below 18 years of age) were registered in the country during 2005, 2006 and 2007 respectively, thereby showing an increasing trend. The numbers of cases of child rape (age below 18 years) registered during these three years were 4026, 4721 and 5045 respectively.

(b) and (c) In the Code of Criminal Procedure (Amendment) Act, 2005 a new provision namely Section 164 A has been incorporated. This provides for medical examination of the victim of rape.

The Law Commission of India in its 172nd Report has recommended changes for widening the scope of the offence in Section 375 of IPC relating to rape with insertion of new Section 376 E dealing with unlawful sexual contact and enhancement of punishment in Section 509 of IPC. Since Criminal Law is on Concurrent List, consultations are also being held with the State Governments in the matter.

Setting up of council on nutritional challenges

2316. SHRI GIREESH KUMAR SANGHI:
DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY:

Will the Minister of WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Prime Minister has decided to set up a National Council on India's nutritional challenges;

(b) if so, whether the Council is expected to provide policy directions to address India's nutritional challenges;

(c) whether the Council has already given its report; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and to what extent it has helped in providing nutrition in the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY): (a) Yes, Sir. Prime Minister's National Council on India's Nutrition Challenges has been constituted recently vide Notification No. 540/3/C/2/208-ES-2 dated 31.10.2008.

(b) Yes, Sir. The Council is mandated to provide (i) Policy Direction, (ii) Review and (iii) Effective Coordination between Ministries which will have a sectoral responsibility for the challenge of Nutrition.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise in view of (c) above.